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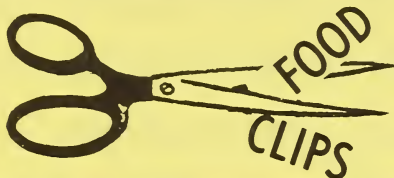
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Food and Home Notes

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
OFFICE OF INFORMATION WASHINGTON, D. C.

April 9, 1973



SUBJECTS — In This Issue:

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Don't forget—whole fruits, halves, and slices of similar size are more expensive than mixed pieces. The mixed pieces are ideal for gelatin molds and other dishes where the appearance of the fruit is not important.

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What are brined pickles? Sometimes they are called fermented pickles—they go through a curing process of about three weeks. Dilled cucumbers and sauerkraut belong in this group. Other vegetables, such as green tomatoes, may also be cured in the same way as cucumbers/

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Save those nutrients! When boiling vegetables, cook only until tender in order to insure the best flavor, color texture, and food value. Overcooked vegetables not only look unattractive but have a marked loss of flavor and food value, according to the U. S. Department of Agriculture.

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When the term bread is used, it generally refers to quick breads or yeast-leavened bread (unless otherwise stated) according to USDA home economists.

SUMMER FEEDING PROGRAM —For Children

Nutritious lunches and snacks at school sites, playgrounds, and recreation areas are now being organized for the summer of '73 feeding program by the Food and Nutrition Service of the U.S. Department of Agriculture. Last summer nearly one and a half million children from low-income neighborhoods participated in this program which is similar to the National School Lunch Program that operates during the regular school year.

Many of the programs are sponsored by private nonprofit institutions or public institutions during the summer months for the benefit of children from areas in which poor economic conditions exist—or areas where there are high concentrations of working mothers. Frequently programs are also sponsored by recreation groups, civic, community action, church or social service organizations.

Can you help? Information on how to sponsor such a program, or how to be a volunteer to work on these programs may be obtained from the Child Nutrition Division of Summer Feeding Programs, Food and Nutrition Service, USDA, Washington, D.C. 20250. 6885
USDA 1005-73

U.S.D.A. FOOD RESEARCH

TRY A RICE SQUARE —

It may not look like rice, taste like rice—but it is rice! For, big changes are in store for that old familiar little grain of rice. It's a new frozen rice product developed by U.S. Department of Agriculture scientists called "rice shapes." The new look for rice may be in squares, circles or even triangles—or a star. The new—and strange shaped—rice may also be flavored.

Rice squares are made from a mixture of rice and flavor ingredients, covered with a layer of ground potato or pinto bean flakes and then partially fried to form a thick, crisp crust that leaves the interior tender and chewy. Rice shapes show a strong potential for increasing rice consumption.

How will the new rice be used? Any variety of ways is possible from the breakfast plate to the barbecue rice-ka-bob.

Rice shapes can be eaten just as a snack—but they are more than that. Shapes can also serve as the carbohydrate portion of a balanced meal or as a partial meat substitute. They can even be supplemented with protein as a food to help feed the world's poor.

Scientists at the Agricultural Research Laboratories first soak raw rice in water to bring the moisture content up to about 40 percent. Then they steam the rice at atmospheric pressure and cook it. Spices may be added just before cooking if desired, to insure uniform flavor. Dehydrated ingredients such as diced bellpepper or minced onion should also be added at this stage so that these ingredients receive adequate moisture and cooking.

Soy flour or other protein supplements can be added to increase the product's protein content. These supplements should be added during the last 10 minutes of cooking, however, so that the flour will not compete with the rice for moisture.

—OR A RICE-KA-BOB?

Improperly cooked soy flour can cause rice shapes to be grainy.

Low moisture ingredients such as potato or bean flakes are added last as they absorb moisture rapidly and compete with the rice for moisture. The rice mixture can be molded immediately after cooking. Further processing includes adding crust material and steaming before frying (steaming reduces fat content from final product by 20 percent). After the frying process, the rice shapes are frozen at 20 to 30°F in a blast freezer for 15 minutes.

The consumer only has to bake them in the oven, much like the frozen french fries. For institutional use, rice shapes can be deep-fat fried for one minute at 375°.

The rice shapes score high on flavor—over 85 percent of a taste panel at the ARS laboratory gave a high rating to this new food.

Rice shapes are the creation of USDA's engineer Charles C. Huxsoll, biologist Douglas N. Homnick, and food scientist Catherine J. Dunlap. The research was conducted at the ARS Western regional research laboratory in Berkeley, California.



New Rice Shape



Q'S AND A'S ON PLENTIFUL FOODS



Is it true that dry peas were the first convenience food?

So the legend goes. Thousands of years ago history tells us dry peas were first recorded as an edible, "traveling" convenience food. Even then people were looking for foods light in weight for ease on the traveler's, or camel's back; food that could be stored for long periods of time, and a food that was loaded with the hearty goodness needed by travel weary folks. Dry peas filled the bill.

Why are dry peas included in the USDA Daily Food Guide as a "meat alternate"?

Because dry peas are not a "meat", but a vegetable...a vegetable that contributes protein to the diet. Dry peas do not contain all the essential amino acids of "meat", but make a major contribution in that nutritional area.

What's the difference between yellow and green dry peas?

Just the color. Nutritionally and cooking-wise, yellow and green dry peas are the same.

What's the difference between whole and split dry peas?

Whole dry peas are wrapped by nature with a hard, water-resistant covering, or skin. Removal of this skin reveals two "kernels" or a pair of split peas from every "whole" dry pea.

Do dry peas contain any vitamins and minerals?

Yes, they are a source of both vitamins and minerals. Dry peas contain B vitamins, especially thiamine, and also minerals, calcium and iron.

Can dry peas help me stretch my food budget?

Yes, they can. Dry peas, whole or split, yellow or green, offer inexpensive menu variety along with appetite appeal. Dry peas are very economical, low in cost for a high amount of usable plant protein.

COMMENTS AND INQUIRIES TO:

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